

Claims 1-2 and 4-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) said to be anticipated by U.S. patent 6,723,824 (the '824 patent).

The '824 patent is based on a PCT application filed May 25, 2000. The applicable section 102(e) makes the '824 unavailable as a 102(e) reference against the present application that claims November 3, 1999 the date of the German priority document 19952851.9.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are requested.

Believing the above represent a complete response to the Office Action and that the application is in condition for allowance, Applicants request the earliest issuance of an indication to this effect.

Respectfully submitted,

By _____

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